

The Norman Conquest

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mina, and Troina, while there were still native emirs in Syracuse, Trapani, and Castrogiovanni.

It was while engaged in war against the latter that the gallant young Serb, out hunting and without armour, was cut off along with a few companions by a raiding party of Moslems, and retiring to a rock which the Arabs still called a hundred years later *Hagar Sarlu* (Serlo's rock) sold his life dearly.

From 1075, the war took a vigour which it had previously lacked. The Moslems of Syracuse found at least a gallant soldier in their Emir Bernavert; Jordan, the natural son of Roger, leading an expedition against him, was ambushed and defeated. This recalled the Count to Sicily and now indeed the war became a crusade; in effect Roger had now built up a fleet of his own, on the model of Guiscard's, and could contemplate war by land and sea. By means of his ships, he took Trapani in the summer of 1077. In August, 1079, by the fall of Taormina the Moslems were reduced to three strongholds only, Girgenti, Syracuse, and Castrogiovanni. The Emir of Syracuse was yet capable of a gallant resistance, and even more than that, for in 1084 his galleys plundered

Reggio and
Nicotera on the Calabrian coast.
But he was
at last overwhelmed by the
armaments which
the Count collected in the winter of
1085. At the
end of March, 1086, Roger's fleet sailed
into the
harbour of Syracuse; Bernavert, in
engaging them,
had to abandon one sinking ship for
another; in